

Message Text

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63 S

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07

H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01

SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 SCEM-02 SCI-06

OMB-01 EB-11 DRC-01 /181 W
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R 240100Z NOV 73

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8355

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN 1182

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

EC BRUSSELS 1047

USMISSION OECD PARIS

UNCLAS TOKYO 15269

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, ENRG, JA, XF

SUBJECT: PRESS REACTION TO GOJ MIDDLE EAST STATEMENT

REF: TOKYO 15261

1. EVENING NOV 22 PRESS COVERAGE NEW GOJ POLICY
STATEMENT ON MIDDLE EAST LIMITED TO STRAIGHT
REPORTING OF STATEMENT. MOST PAPERS JUXTAPOSED
ARTICLES ON NEW GOJ POLICY WITH REPORTS ON SECRETARY
KISSINGER WASHINGTON PRESS CONFERENCE. LATTER ARTICLES
HIGHLIGHTED STATEMENT U.S. POLICY WOULD NOT BE
DICTATED BY ARABS AND POSSIBILITY U.S. MIGHT CONSIDER
SOME FORM OF RETALIATION.

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2. MORNING PRESS NOV 23 GAVE FULLER COVERAGE TO

NIKAIDO PRESS CONFERENCE. QUOTED NIKAI DO AS EXPRESSING HOPE THAT NEW POLICY WOULD CAUSE ARAB COUNTRIES TO EASE ATTITUDE TOWARD JAPAN. ASKED DIRECTLY IF PORTION OF GOJ STATEMENT TO EFFECT JAPAN WOULD RESTUDY POSITION VIS-A-VISA ISRAEL MEANT GOJ CONSIDERING BREAKING TIES WITH ISRAEL NIKAI DO SAID SUCH CONSIDERATION DEPENDS UPON FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS AND IT WOULD NOT BE WELL MAKE PREMATURE COMMENTS AT THIS TIME. NIKAI DO ALSO TOLD PRESS THAT NO RPT NO PRIOR TALKS WERE HELD IN WASHINGTON ON CHANGE IN MIDDLE EAST POLICY. HE ALSO STATED THAT JAPAN HAD ALREADY BUDGETED \$3 MILLION IN AID TO PALESTINE REFUGEES AND \$2 MILLION WORTH OF FOOD AND CLOTHING TO REFUGEE AID HEAD-QUARTERS.

3. MORNING PRESS NOV 23 CONTINUED BALANCED COVERAGE OF NEW POLICY. FRONT PAGE SPACE ALSO GIVEN TO LDP APPROVAL OF EMERGENCY OIL SUPPLY BILL, REPORTS ON CONTINUING SHORTAGES OF SUGAR, SALT, PAPER AND OTHER ITEMS, AND REPORTED FAVORABLE RESPONSE TO JAPANESE MOVES FROM QUOTE ARAB SOURCES UNQUOTE. MAINICHI PLAYED NEW POLICY AS SHARP BREAK WITH JAPANESE POST-WAR DIPLOMACY WHICH DOMINATED BY COOPERATION WITH U.S. ARTICLE GAVE CONTINUING INFLATION AND THREAT TO PUBLIC ORDER AS REASONS FOR CURRENT MOVE. SPECULATED THAT THIS INITIATIVE ON PART GOJ MIGHT MARK BEGINNING OF NEW ERA IN JAPANESE FOREIGN POLICY. ENGLISH MAINICHI RAN ARTICLE BY STAFF WRITER WHICH GAVE REASON FOR JAPANESE MOVE AT THIS TIME AS BELIEF THAT NOV 24 ARAB MINISTERS MEETING WOULD MOVE TO DIVIDE WORLD INTO FRIENDLY AND UNFRIENDLY NATIONS, DROPPING PRESENT NEUTRAL CATEGORY. THUS JAPAN FORCED TO MOV OR RISK BEING CLASSIFIED AS UNFRIENDLY. ALL PAPERS REPORTED FONMIN OHIRA STATEMENT TO PRESS THAT HE DID NOT BELIEVE GOJ DECISION WOULD HAVE "FATAL EFFECT" ON U.S.-JAPAN RELATIONS ALTHOUGH HE ADMITTED THAT U.S. HAS MISGIVINGS ABOUT JAPAN'S ACTION.

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4. ALTHOUGH NOT ALL PAPERS WERE READY WITH EDITORIAL COMMENT TODAY, GENERRAL MEDIA COMMENTARY TENDED TO SUPPORT GOJ CHANGE OF POLICY AS NECESSARY AND UNAVOIDABLE STEP IN FACE OF OIL CRISIS. CONSERVATIVE SANKEI SAID, HOWEVER, JAPAN MUST GO BEYOND STOPGAP MEASURE REPRESENTED BY NEW POLICY STATEMENT AND DEVELOP MORE SUBSTANTIAL MIDDLE EASTERN POLICY IN COOPERATION WITH US AND

EC. EDITORIAL CALLED FOR CLOSER CONSULTATION AMONG JAPAN, US AND EC TO COPE WITH DIVISIVE TACTICS OF ARABS. IT ALSO ADVOCATED GREATER EFFORTS BY JAPAN TO CLOSE COMMUNICATION GAP WITH ARABS WHOSE PROBLEMS JAPAN HAD TENDED TO IGNORE AND WHO DO NOT UNDERSTAND JAPAN'S ABSOLUTE NEED TO MAINTAIN CLOSE AND FRIENDLY TIES WITH US. YOMIURI EDITORIAL VOICED FULL SUPPORT AND APPRECIATION FOR GOJ POLICY CHANGE AND ALSO EXPRESSED

HOPE THAT ARABS WOULD REALIZE JAPAN'S CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE US AND WOULD APPRECIATE THAT GIVEN THIS RELATIONSHIP JAPAN HAS DONE ITS UTMOST TO MEET ARAB DEMANDS. YOMIURI STRESSED THAT JAPAN IS POWERLESS TO INFLUENCE US AND CAN ONLY HOPE US EFFORTS TO SECURE PEACE IN MIDDLE EAST WILL BE SUCCESSFUL.

COMMEN-
TARY ON POLICY STATEMENT STRESSED THEME THAT JAPAN IN DILEMMA BEING UNSURE OF EFFECTIVENESS OF CURRENT POLICY INITIATIVE TO EAST ARAB STAND REGARDING JAPAN AND CONCERNED OVER EFFECT NEW MOVE WILL HAVE ON RELATIONSHIP WITH US.
SHOESMITH

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